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Homicide in Canada, 2008

by Sara Beattie

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Symbols

. not available for any reference period
.. not available for a specific reference period
... not applicable
0 true zero or a value rounded to zero
0^s value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
^{p} preliminary
^{r} revised
x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
^{E} use with caution
F too unreliable to be published

Homicide in Canada, 2008: Highlights

- Police reported 611 homicides in Canada during 2008, 17 more than the previous year, resulting in a 2% increase in the homicide rate. After peaking in the mid-1970s, the homicide rate generally declined until 1999 and has been relatively stable since.

- The increase in 2008 was primarily due to increases in homicides in Alberta and British Columbia, many of which were gang-related. Gang-related homicides continued to increase in 2008, accounting for almost one in four homicides in Canada overall.

- Homicide victims were equally likely to be shot or stabbed, with each method accounting for about one-third of all homicides. The rate of firearm homicides has increased 24% since 2002 including a 5% increase in 2008. About 6 in 10 firearm related homicides were committed with a handgun in 2008.

- In 2008, females accounted for 24% of homicide victims, the lowest proportion since data collection began. It was also the lowest rate of females killed since 1961.

- Similar to previous years, the western provinces and territories continued to have the highest homicide rates. Manitoba reported the highest provincial rate followed by Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador and Quebec reported the lowest rates.

- Looking at the 34 census metropolitan areas in Canada, the highest homicide rates were found in the west. Abbotsford-Mission recorded the highest rate, followed by Winnipeg, Regina, Edmonton, Kelowna, Calgary and Vancouver.

- In 2008, 138 homicides were reported by police to have been gang-related. The 2008 total was 20 more than in 2007. In total, more than half of all homicides committed with a firearm in 2008 were gang-related.

- Most homicide victims knew their killer. Last year was no exception, with 83% of solved homicides being committed by someone known to the victim, most often an acquaintance (41%) or a family member (33%).

- Spousal homicide rates have generally been declining over the past 30 years. In 2008, spousal homicides accounted for slightly less than half of all homicides committed by family members, consistent with the previous year.

- The number of youth accused of homicide has dropped from a peak of 85 in 2006 to 74 in 2007 and to 55 in 2008.

Homicide in Canada, 2008

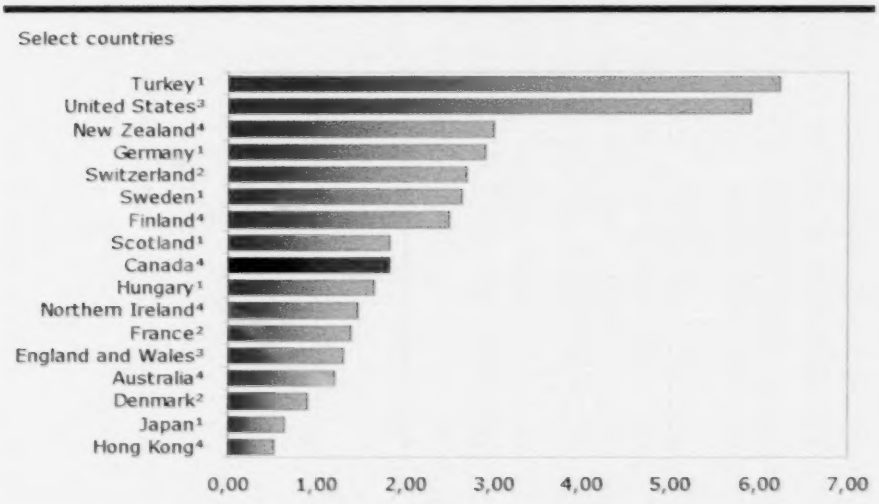
by Sara Beattie

Homicides continue to be a rare occurrence in Canada, accounting for less than 1% of all violent crimes reported by police. Homicide was one of the few violent crimes to increase in 2008; by comparison attempted murders dropped 10%.[1]

Canadians are about six times more likely to commit suicide and about four times more likely to be killed in a traffic accident than they are to be a victim of homicide.[2]

Homicide is the most serious criminal offence, and a country's homicide rate is often used as a barometer of the level of violence in that society. It is also the only criminal offence that is truly comparable among nations. Compared to other countries, Canada's homicide rate continues to be about one-third that of the United States, but comparable to many European nations (Chart 1).

Chart 1
Homicide rates for selected countries



1. Figures reflect 2005 data.
2. Figures reflect 2006 data.
3. Figures reflect 2007 data.
4. Figures reflect 2008 data.

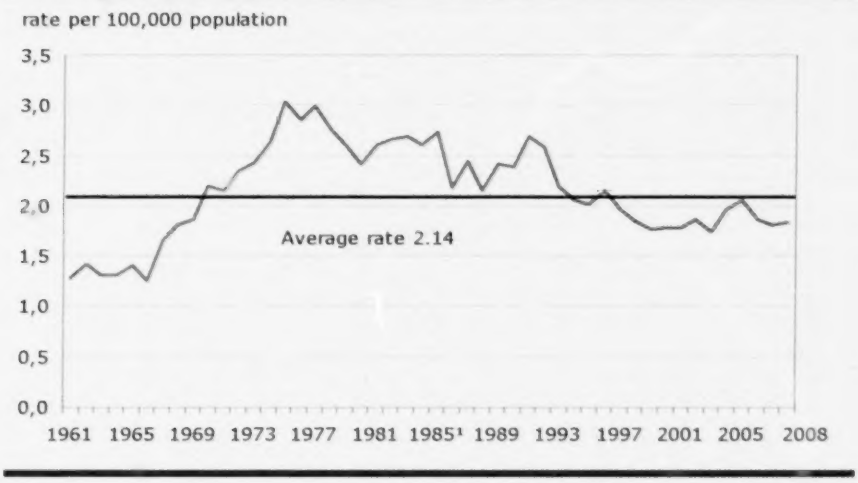
Source: Statistics Canada, Interpol Ottawa and national statistical office websites.

Canada's homicide rate increased slightly in 2008

There were 611 homicides reported by police in 2008, 17 more than the previous year, representing an increase of 2% in the homicide rate. Virtually all of the increase came from British Columbia and Alberta.

Between the mid-1960s and mid-1970s, Canada experienced a sharp rise in its homicide rate. The rate more than doubled over this period, from 1.25 homicides per 100,000 population in 1966 to 3.03 in 1975. The homicide rate generally declined over the next 25 years, dropping 42% between 1975 and 1999. Since 1999, despite some annual fluctuations, the rate has remained relatively stable (Chart 2).

Chart 2
Homicides peaked in mid-1970s



1. Excludes 329 victims killed in the Air India incident.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Homicide rates highest in the west and the north

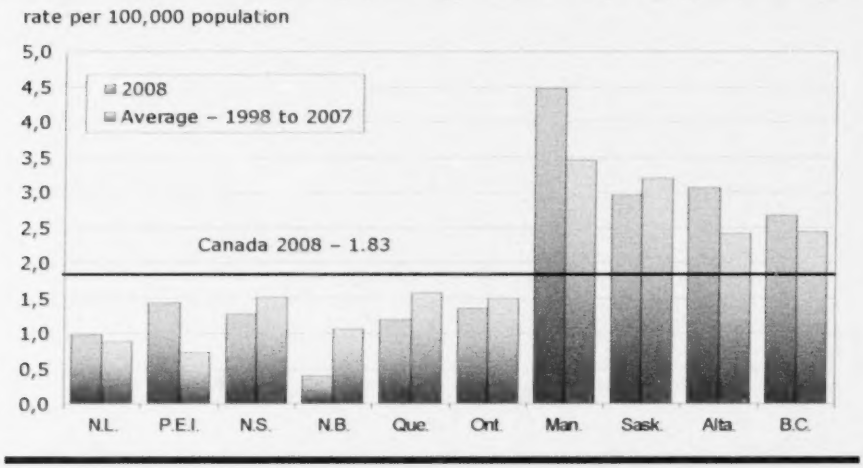
Historically, the western provinces and the territories have reported the highest homicide rates in the country.

This trend continued in 2008 with Manitoba reporting the highest rate followed by Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador and Quebec reported the lowest rates (Table 1).

In 2008, two of Canada's western provinces drove the national increase in homicides: British Columbia with 117 homicides (an increase of 29 homicides from 2007) and Alberta with 110 homicides (22 more) (Table 2). The increase in both British Columbia and Alberta was mainly due to an increase in homicides committed outside of the major metropolitan areas of these provinces.

Rates in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia declined from the previous year. New Brunswick's rate was the lowest in that province in 40 years as well as the lowest in the country in 2008. While Quebec's homicide rate increased slightly from the previous year, in 2008 it was still at its second lowest point in over 40 years. The decline in homicides in Ontario resulted in the second lowest homicide rate in that province since the mid 1960s; only in 2000 was the rate lower (Chart 3).

Chart 3
Highest homicide rates in Manitoba and Alberta



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Homicide rates highest in the western census metropolitan areas

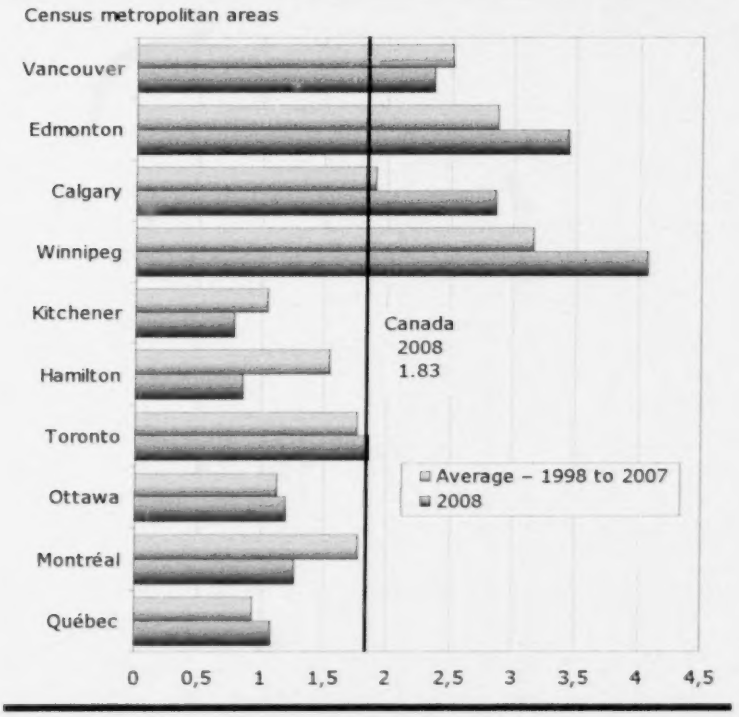
Canadians living in large urban areas tend to be at slightly less risk of being a victim of a homicide than those living in smaller urban or rural areas. In 2008, the 22.9 million Canadians living in one of the 34 census metropolitan areas (CMA) had a lower homicide rate (1.8) than the 10.4 million Canadians living outside a CMA (2.0) (Table 3).

In 2008, homicide rates in CMAs declined by 7% from the previous year, whereas rates in non-CMAs (less than 100,000 population) increased by 25% (Table 3).

In 2008, the highest homicides rates across the country were found in the metropolitan areas of western Canada. Among the 34 CMAs, the rate in Abbotsford-Mission was highest with 4.7 homicides per 100,000 population, followed by Winnipeg (4.1), Regina (3.8), Edmonton (3.4), Kelowna (3.4), Calgary (2.9) and Vancouver (2.4).

With about 1 in every 6 homicides in the country, Toronto had the highest number of homicides (103) of any CMA. However, taking population into account, Toronto's rate of 1.9 homicides per 100,000 ranked in the middle of the 10 largest CMAs and was close to the national average of 1.8 (Chart 4)

Chart 4
Among the largest census metropolitan areas homicide rates highest in west



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Montréal (1.3) and Hamilton (0.9) each reported their lowest homicide rates since 1981, when data first became available at the CMA level.

Victims of homicide continue to be equally likely to be shot or stabbed

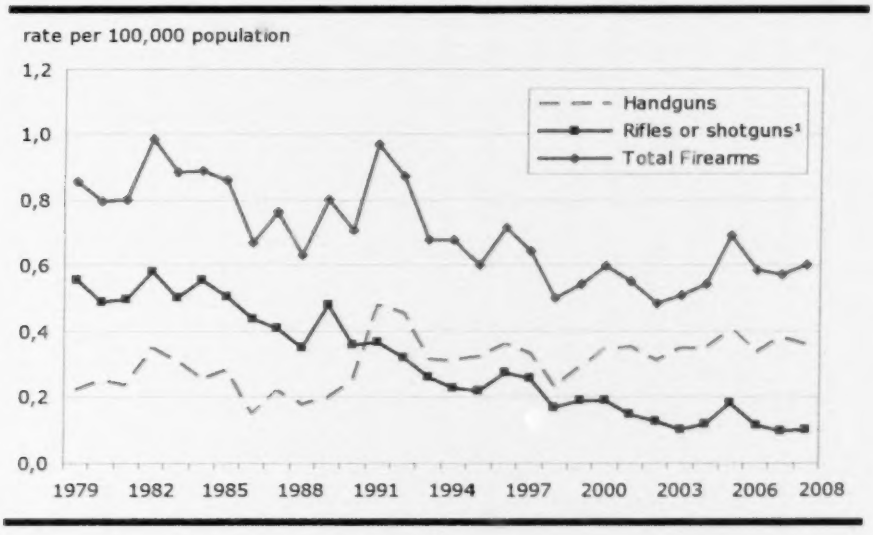
For the past 30 years, there have been two primary methods used to commit homicide: shootings and stabbings. In 2008, this trend continued as shootings and stabbings each accounted for approximately one-third of all homicides. There were 200 victims killed by shooting, 12 more than the previous year, and 200 killed by stabbing, an increase of 10 from 2007.

A further 20% of victims were beaten, 7% strangled/suffocated and the remaining 7% were killed by other methods such as vehicles, fire (smoke inhalation, burns), poisoning and shaken baby syndrome (Table 4).

Firearm homicides up 24% since 2002

The overall rate of homicides committed with a firearm generally declined from the mid-1970s to 2002. However, since then, the rate of firearm homicides has generally been increasing. Between 2002 and 2008 the rate of firearm homicides went up by 24% including a 5% increase in 2008 (Chart 5).

Chart 5
Use of firearms generally increasing since 2002



1. Excludes sawed-off rifles or shotguns.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

The Toronto CMA reported 50 firearm homicides and 24 gang-related homicides in 2008, the most of any CMA. Taking population into account, however, the 12 firearm homicides in Winnipeg and the 16 in Edmonton gave those metropolitan areas the highest rates among the 10 largest CMAs.

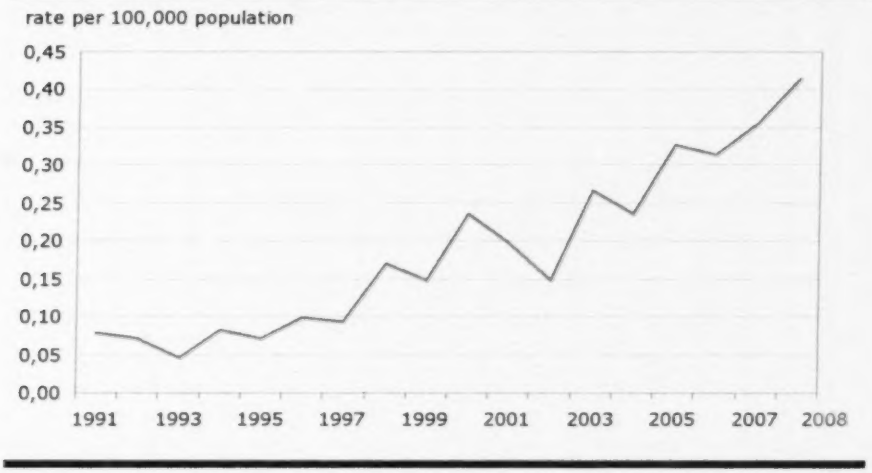
Of the 200 homicides committed with a firearm in 2008, 61% or 121 were handguns. There were also 34 homicides committed with rifles or shotguns, up slightly from 2007 (Table 5).

The use of handguns to commit homicide has generally been increasing, while the use of rifles/shotguns has generally declined over the past 30 years. Handguns were the firearm of choice in major metropolitan areas, used in 72% of all firearm homicides. In non-CMA areas, rifles or shotguns were the most prevalent, being used in almost half or 48% of all firearm homicides (Table 7).

About one in four homicides were gang-related

Gang-related homicides, which include the death of organized crime and street gang members, as well as innocent bystanders, have been increasing since the early 1990s (Chart 6). In 2008, 138 homicides were reported by police to have been gang-related, accounting for about 1 in 4 homicides. The 2008 total was 20 more than in 2007 (Table 6).

Chart 6
Gang-related homicides continue to increase



Note: These data became available beginning in 1991.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

In Alberta, 35 of the 110 homicides in 2008 were gang-related, giving it the highest proportion (32%) among the provinces, followed by British Columbia (29%) and Manitoba (26%). The Atlantic Provinces (5%) and Saskatchewan (7%) reported the lowest proportions of gang-related homicides.

Two-thirds of the increase in homicides in Alberta between 2007 and 2008 was due to an increase in gang-related homicides. In British Columbia, gang-related homicides accounted for about one-third of the provincial increase in homicides.

Most gang-related homicides occurred within Canada's largest cities. The 10 largest metropolitan areas accounted for about 55% of Canada's homicides in 2008, but more than two-thirds of gang-related homicides. Calgary reported the highest rate of gang-related homicides of any of these CMAs (Table 7).

Firearms were used more often in gang-related homicides than in other types of homicide. In 2008, 77% of gang-related homicides were committed with a firearm, compared to about 20% of homicides that did not involve gangs. In 2008, the number of gang-related homicides involving handguns increased by 26% from the previous year. Most of this increase occurred in Ontario and Alberta. However, there was a slight decline in the number of handguns used in homicides overall.

Homicides involving other illegal activities

In addition to gang-related homicides,[3] there were 28 homicides in 2008 that were linked to the victims' illegal activity, such as the drug trade and prostitution. This was down from 58 in 2007. Police reported three prostitutes killed as a direct result of their profession in 2008, down from an average of seven killed annually over the past decade.

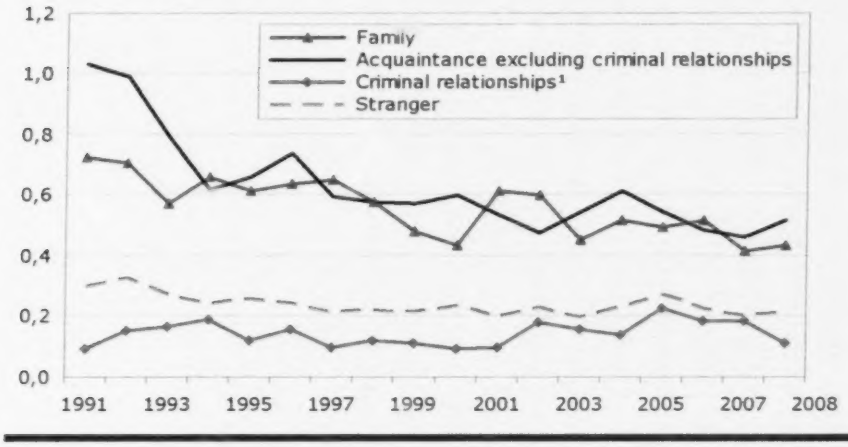
In comparison, it is less common to be a victim of homicide as a direct result of legal employment. On average, 14 victims have been killed each year since 1998 while "on the-job". In 2008, there were five "legal occupation" related homicides. In 2008, there were no police officers killed as a direct result of their profession. There has been an average of three police officers murdered each year since 1961.

The large majority of victims knew their attacker

Most victims knew their killer. In 2008, 70 solved homicides (17%) were committed by someone not known to the victim, a slight increase over 2007. The rate of homicides committed by a stranger has been fairly stable over the past 30 years.

Homicide victims in Canada are most likely to be killed by an acquaintance followed by a family member. In 2008, of all solved homicides, about 40% of victims were killed by an acquaintance and 33% by a family member (Chart 7).

Chart 7
Most homicides committed by someone known to victim

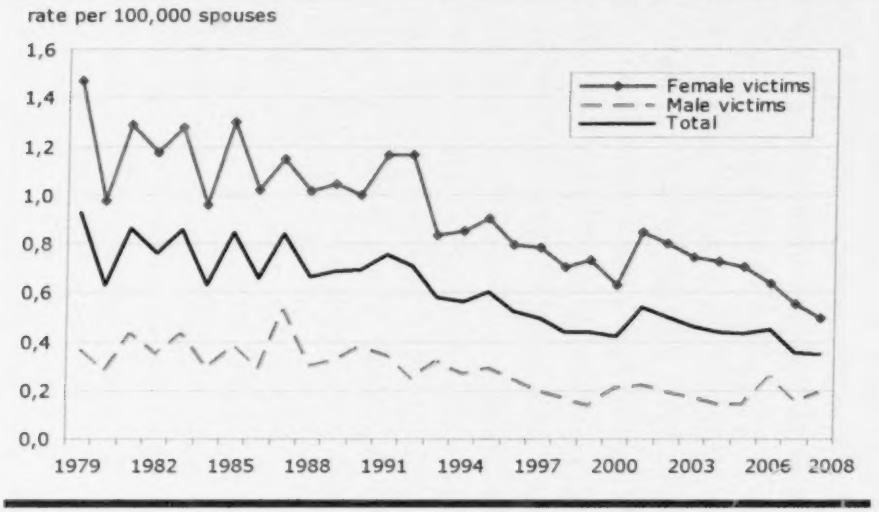


1. Includes prostitutes, drug dealers and their clients, loansharks, gang members. It should be noted that some gang homicides are scored under "acquaintance".
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Spousal homicides continue to decline

The rate of spousal homicide has been generally declining since the mid-1970s. Some of the decline can be attributed to factors such as: male to female employment ratios, rising divorce rates and higher education levels for both men and women (Dawson, Pottie-Bunge and Baldé, 2009). In 2008, there were 62 spousal homicides, the same number as in 2007. The spousal homicide rate is now at its lowest point since the mid 1960s (Chart 8).

Chart 8
Spousal homicide rate generally declining over the past 30 years



Note: Spouses include legally married, common-law, separated, and divorced persons age 15 years or older. Excludes same-sex spouses due to the unavailability of Census data on same-sex couples.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Women continue to be about three times more likely to be victims of spousal homicide than men.[4] In 2008, there were 45 women and 17 men killed by a current or former spouse. Men were more likely to be killed by a common-law spouse, while women were more often killed by a legally-married spouse (Table 8).

In 2008, there was a large decline in the number of women killed by their common-law partner from 21 in 2007 to 10 in 2008.

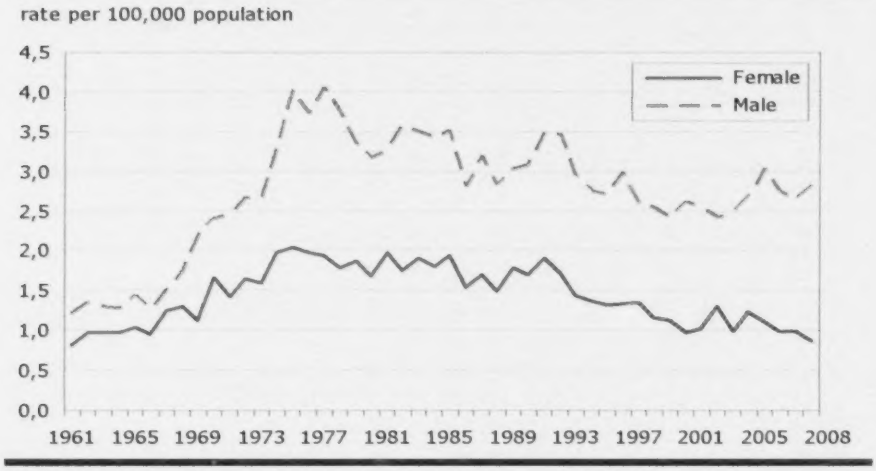
Women also continue to be at greater risk than men of being killed by an ex-spouse. In 2008, 13 of the 45 female spousal victims were killed by a separated or divorced spouse, compared to 1 male killed by an ex-spouse.

In addition to the 62 spousal homicides, there were 27 homicides committed by a current or former boyfriend/girlfriend or intimate partner in 2008, 8 more than the previous year.

Lowest rate of female victims ever recorded

In 2008, females accounted for the lowest proportion (24%) of homicide victims recorded since data collection began. There were 146 female victims in 2008, 17 fewer than in 2007. The rate of female victims has generally been declining since the late 1960s (Chart 9). This decline may be related to the decline in spousal homicide rates over the past 30 years, which usually involve female victims, as well as the fact that gang-related homicides, which usually involve male victims, have increased.

Chart 9
Lowest rate of females killed since 1961



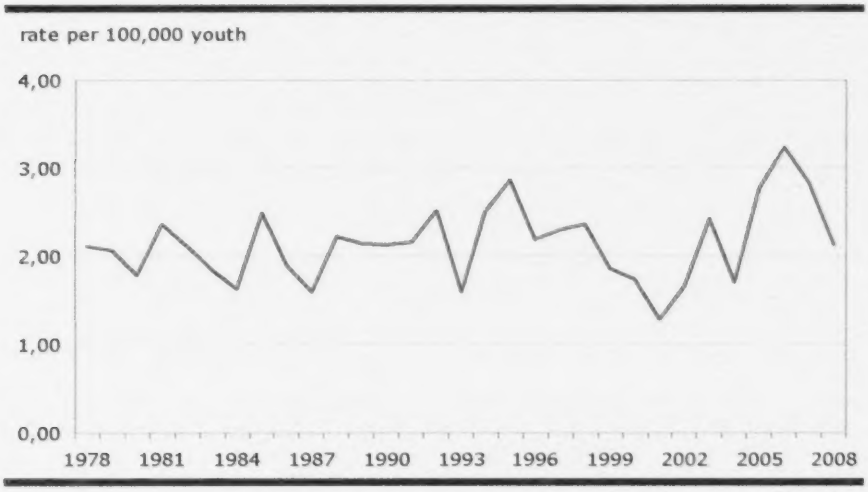
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

As has been the case historically, males accounted for about 9 in 10 accused persons in 2008 (Table 9). The age of males accused of homicide has been getting lower in recent years, whereas the age of female accused has been increasing. The median age of accused males has fallen from 29 in 2002 to 25 in 2008, while the age of accused females has increased from 28 in 2002 to 32 in 2008.

Drop in youth accused follows peak in 2006

Despite annual fluctuations, the rate of youth accused of homicide has remained relatively stable over the past 30 years. Overall, there were 55 youth aged 12 to 17 (51 males and 4 females) accused of homicide in 2008, 19 fewer than in 2007 (Chart 10, Table 10). The 2008 rate of female youth accused (0.3 per 100,000 youth) was the lowest recorded in the past decade.

Chart 10
Youth 12 to 17 years accused of homicide down for second consecutive year



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Compared to adults, higher proportions of incidents involving youth had multiple accused or were gang-related. Among incidents with an accused youth, 57% involved multiple accused compared to 17% where an adult was accused. Similarly, 32% of incidents with a youth accused involved gangs compared to 11% of incidents with an adult accused.

Homicides committed by youth in 2008 also differed from those committed by adults in the method used to kill. While the most common method employed by a youth to commit homicide in 2008 was a physical beating (38%), shootings were the most common method used by adults (37%).

Summary

In Canada, homicides are relatively rare, accounting for less than 1% of all violent crime reported to police. After peaking in 1975, the homicide rate generally declined over the next 25 years, dropping 42% between 1975 and 1999. Since 1999, the rate has been relatively stable, despite a 2% increase in 2008.

Gang-related homicides continue to increase and now account for about 1 in 4 homicides in Canada compared to 9% in 1998.

In 2008, females accounted for 24% of all homicide victims, the lowest proportion recorded since data collection began in 1961.

Canadian homicide victims are equally likely to be shot or stabbed, with each method accounting for about one-third of all homicides. The rate of firearm homicides has increased 24% since 2002 including a 5% increase in 2008. About 6 in 10 firearm related homicides were committed with a handgun in 2008.

Homicide victims in Canada are more likely to be killed by an acquaintance or a family member than a stranger. In 2008, 83% of solved homicides were committed by someone known to the victim.

After peaking in 2006 at 85, the number of youth accused of committing a homicide dropped to 74 in 2007 and to 55 in 2008.

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Wallace, Marnie. 2008. "Police reported crime statistics in Canada, 2008." *Juristat*. Vol. 29, no. 3. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-XIE.
www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2009003/article/10902-eng.htm (accessed September 28, 2009).

Notes

1. Wallace, Marnie. 2008. "Police reported crime statistics in Canada, 2008." Juristat, Statistics Canada catalogue no. 85-002-X, vol. 29, no. 3.

2. There were 2,896 deaths resulting from a traffic accident, and 3,743 suicides reported to Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics - Death Database, in 2005, the latest year for which data are available.

3. There were 73 gang-related homicides which were linked to the victims' involvement in illegal activities.

4. Includes common-law, separated and divorced spouses.

Detailed data tables

Table 1
Homicide rates by province or territory, 1978 to 2008

Year	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.[1]	Y.T.	N.W.T.	Nvt[2]	Canada	Percent change Canada
	rate[3]														percent
1978	1.59	3.29	1.54	3.86	2.79	2.12	3.75	3.36	4.15	3.25	8.42	8.84	...	2.76	-8.0
1979	0.88	0.00	2.00	1.56	2.88	2.02	4.24	3.75	2.67	3.38	16.67	15.31	...	2.61	-5.5
1980	0.52	0.81	1.41	1.27	2.78	1.81	3.00	3.20	2.51	3.83	8.22	8.64	...	2.41	-7.4
1981	0.70	0.81	1.29	2.41	2.84	1.93	3.96	2.97	3.18	3.90	4.18	10.51	...	2.61	8.1
1982	1.04	0.00	1.40	1.84	2.89	2.06	3.34	3.95	2.96	3.79	8.17	14.14	...	2.66	1.7
1983	1.04	0.00	1.50	1.54	2.88	2.23	3.77	3.29	3.14	3.72	4.23	5.88	...	2.69	1.2
1984	1.03	0.00	1.71	1.94	2.99	2.07	4.01	2.95	2.26	3.73	8.36	9.51	...	2.60	-3.1
1985[4]	0.86	0.78	2.94	1.93	3.29	2.08	2.40	2.73	2.62	3.80	24.63	18.38	...	2.72	4.6
1986	0.69	0.00	1.69	1.65	2.33	1.47	4.31	2.53	2.63	2.96	12.26	25.60	...	2.18	-20.0
1987	0.87	0.00	1.57	2.75	2.57	2.12	4.01	2.90	3.00	2.56	0.00	3.63	...	2.43	11.7
1988	1.22	0.77	1.23	1.10	2.25	1.89	2.81	2.24	2.69	2.57	3.76	14.37	...	2.15	-11.7
1989	0.87	0.77	1.77	2.45	3.10	1.73	3.90	2.16	2.69	2.69	7.38	12.27	...	2.41	12.0
1990	0.00	0.77	0.99	1.62	2.63	1.77	3.53	3.57	2.91	3.34	3.60	20.37	...	2.38	-1.1
1991	1.73	1.53	2.29	2.28	2.56	2.35	3.79	2.09	3.24	3.79	0.00	4.92	...	2.69	12.9
1992	0.34	0.00	2.28	1.47	2.34	2.29	2.61	3.19	3.49	3.52	6.64	20.86	...	2.58	-4.1
1993	1.21	1.51	2.06	1.47	2.22	1.80	2.77	2.98	1.84	3.36	0.00	11.04	...	2.19	-15.3
1994	0.70	0.75	2.05	2.00	1.75	1.77	2.58	2.38	2.44	3.07	10.10	6.15	...	2.06	-6.0
1995	0.88	0.74	1.83	1.86	1.87	1.65	2.39	2.07	2.19	3.18	13.14	4.52	...	2.01	-2.4
1996	1.25	0.74	1.93	1.20	2.13	1.69	3.97	3.14	1.91	3.23	0.00	5.93	...	2.14	6.9
1997	1.27	0.00	2.57	1.06	1.81	1.59	2.73	2.46	2.16	2.94	3.15	4.44	...	1.96	-8.6
1998	1.30	0.74	2.58	0.67	1.88	1.37	2.90	3.24	2.21	2.26	9.63	7.44	...	1.85	-5.6
1999	0.37	0.73	1.39	1.20	1.87	1.41	2.28	1.28	2.07	2.74	3.25	2.46	7.46	1.77	-4.4
2000	1.14	2.20	1.61	1.33	2.04	1.34	2.61	2.58	1.96	2.10	6.57	2.47	10.91	1.78	0.5
2001	0.19	1.46	0.97	1.07	1.89	1.43	2.95	2.70	2.29	2.06	3.32	9.79	10.66	1.78	0.2
2002	0.38	0.73	0.96	1.20	1.59	1.47	3.11	2.71	2.24	3.07	0.00	9.60	6.94	1.86	4.1
2003	0.96	0.73	0.85	1.07	1.32	1.45	3.69	4.11	2.01	2.28	3.23	9.40	10.23	1.74	-6.5
2004	0.39	0.00	1.49	0.93	1.47	1.51	4.26	3.91	2.65	2.72	22.24	9.24	13.40	1.95	12.6
2005	2.14	0.00	2.13	1.20	1.32	1.75	4.16	4.33	3.25	2.41	3.13	0.00	6.59	2.06	5.2
2006	1.37	0.73	1.71	0.94	1.22	1.55	3.29	4.23	2.78	2.55	0.00	0.00	6.49	1.86	-9.5
2007[r]	0.59	0.00	1.39	1.07	1.17	1.58	5.11	3.00	2.51	2.04	6.14	4.59	22.40	1.80	-3.0
2008	0.98	1.43	1.28	0.40	1.19	1.36	4.47	2.95	3.07	2.67	9.05	6.93	12.72	1.83	1.7

1. As a result of investigations in Port Coquitlam, B.C., there were 5 homicides reported in 2007, 5 reported in 2004, 7 reported in 2003 and 15 included in 2002 that occurred in previous years. Homicides are counted according to the year in which police file the report.
2. Includes Nunavut before 1999.
3. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population. Population estimates at July 1st provided by Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Estimates are final intercensal from 1978 to 2005, final postcensal for 2006, updated postcensal for 2007 and preliminary postcensal for 2008.
4. Excludes 329 victims in the Air India incident.

Note: There are some homicides that are included in a given year's total that occurred in previous years. Homicides are counted according to the year in which police submit the Homicide Survey to Statistics Canada.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Table 2
Number of homicides by province or territory, 1978 to 2008

Year	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.[1]	Y.T.	N.W.T.	Nvt[2]	Canada
	number													
1978	9	4	13	27	180	182	39	32	84	85	2	4	...	**661**
1979	5	0	17	11	186	175	44	36	56	90	4	7	...	**631**
1980	3	1	12	9	181	158	31	31	55	105	2	4	...	**592**
1981	4	1	11	17	186	170	41	29	73	110	1	5	...	**648**
1982	6	0	12	13	190	184	35	39	70	109	2	7	...	**667**
1983	6	0	13	11	190	202	40	33	75	108	1	3	...	**682**
1984	6	0	15	14	198	190	43	30	54	110	2	5	...	**667**
1985[3]	5	1	26	14	219	193	26	28	63	113	6	10	...	**704**
1986	4	0	15	12	156	139	47	26	64	89	3	14	...	**569**
1987	5	0	14	20	174	204	44	30	73	78	0	2	...	**644**
1988	7	1	11	8	154	186	31	23	66	80	1	8	...	**576**
1989	5	1	16	18	215	175	43	22	67	86	2	7	...	**657**
1990	0	1	9	12	184	182	39	36	74	110	1	12	...	**660**
1991	10	2	21	17	181	245	42	21	84	128	0	3	...	**754**
1992	2	0	21	11	166	242	29	32	92	122	2	13	...	**732**
1993	7	2	19	11	159	192	31	30	49	120	0	7	...	**627**
1994	4	1	19	15	126	192	29	24	66	113	3	4	...	**596**
1995	5	1	17	14	135	181	27	21	60	120	4	3	...	**588**
1996	7	1	18	9	154	187	45	32	53	125	0	4	...	**635**
1997	7	0	24	8	132	178	31	25	61	116	1	3	...	**586**
1998	7	1	24	5	137	156	33	33	64	90	3	5	...	**558**
1999	2	1	13	9	137	162	26	13	61	110	1	1	2	**538**
2000	6	3	15	10	150	156	30	26	59	85	2	1	3	**546**
2001	1	2	9	8	140	170	34	27	70	84	1	4	3	**553**
2002	2	1	9	9	118	178	36	27	70	126	0	4	2	**582**
2003	5	1	8	8	99	178	43	41	64	94	1	4	3	**549**
2004	2	0	14	7	111	187	50	39	86	113	7	4	4	**624**
2005	11	0	20	9	100	219	49	43	108	101	1	0	2	**663**
2006	7	1	16	7	93	196	39	42	95	108	0	0	2	**606**
2007[4]	3	0	13	8	90	202	61	30	88	88	2	2	7	**594**
2008	5	2	12	3	92	176	54	30	110	117	3	3	4	**611**

1. As a result of investigations in Port Coquitlam, B.C., there were 5 homicides reported in 2007, 5 reported in 2004, 7 reported in 2003 and 15 included in 2002 that occurred in previous years. Homicides are counted according to the year in which police file the report.
2. Includes Nunavut before 1999.
3. Excludes 329 victims in the Air India incident.
4. Revised data; there was one victim added to Ontario and one victim removed from Manitoba.

Note: There are some homicides that are included in a given year's total that occurred in previous years. Homicides are counted according to the year in which police submit the Homicide Survey to Statistics Canada.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Table 3
Homicides by census metropolitan area

Census metropolitan areas(CMA)[3]	2008[1]			2007[r,2]		Average 1998 to 2007	
	Population[4]	number of victims	rate[5]	number of victims	rate[5]	number of victims	rate[5]
500,000 and over population							
Toronto	5,532,185	103	1.86	112	2.06	89	1.77
Montréal	3,767,389	48	1.27	59	1.58	63	1.78
Vancouver	2,279,688	54	2.37	55	2.46	53	2.51
Calgary	1,186,732	34	2.87	36	3.10	20	1.91
Edmonton	1,134,670	39	3.44	36	3.24	29	2.87
Ottawa[6]	914,581	11	1.20	14	1.56	10	1.14
Winnipeg[r]	761,166	31	4.07	27	3.66	22	3.16
Québec	736,665	8	1.09	0	0.00	7	0.93
Hamilton	704,712	6	0.85	11	1.54	11	1.55
Kitchener	510,784	4	0.78	7	1.39	5	1.05
Total	**17,528,572**	**338**	**1.93**	**357**	**2.07**	**307**	**1.90**
100,000 to less than 500,000 population							
London	486,157	2	0.41	6	1.24	6	1.31
St. Catharines–Niagara	442,121	6	1.36	3	0.68	6	1.39
Halifax	394,565	7	1.77	7	1.80	7	1.92
Oshawa	357,147	4	1.12	5	1.45	2	0.76
Victoria	347,146	5	1.44	4	1.16	5	1.64
Windsor	333,534	7	2.10	4	1.19	6	1.79
Gatineau[7]	295,876	4	1.35	2	0.69	4	1.31
Saskatoon	258,770	4	1.55	9	3.57	7	2.92
Regina	209,569	8	3.82	5	2.44	7	3.69
Barrie[8]	194,755	0	0.00	3	1.55	4	1.82
St. John's	183,305	1	0.55	1	0.55	1	0.79
Sherbrooke	182,856	0	0.00	2	1.10	1	0.72
Kelowna[8]	174,771	6	3.43	3	1.76	3	1.78
Abbotsford–Mission[9]	169,745	8	4.71	2	1.20	4	2.49
Greater Sudbury	164,412	2	1.22	4	2.44	2	1.48
Kingston[9]	156,855	1	0.64	1	0.64	3	1.67
Trois-Rivières	147,682	1	0.68	4	2.73	1	0.82
Saguenay	144,598	0	0.00	1	0.69	1	0.84
Brantford[8]	137,453	2	1.46	1	0.73	2	1.10
Moncton[8]	132,613	0	0.00	2	1.53	2	1.15
Guelph[8]	121,549	0	0.00	1	0.83	2	1.25
Peterborough[8]	120,753	1	0.83	1	0.83	1	0.42
Thunder Bay	119,557	0	0.00	2	1.58	2	1.59
Saint John	101,936	1	0.98	2	1.97	1	0.77
Total	**5,377,725**	**70**	**1.30**	**75**	**1.41**	**79**	**1.53**
CMA totals	**22,906,297**	**408**	**1.78**	**432**	**1.91**	**386**	**1.81**
Less than 100,000 population[r]	**10,405,092**	**203**	**1.95**	**162**	**1.56**	**195**	**1.91**
Canada	**33,311,389**	**611**	**1.83**	**594**	**1.80**	**581**	**1.85**

1. A total of 9 homicides were reported and included in 2008 but occurred in previous years: 1 in Montréal; 1 in Saskatoon; 1 in Vancouver; and 6 in areas less than 100,000 population.
2. A total of 17 homicides were reported and included in 2007 but occurred in previous years: 1 in Montréal; 1 in Toronto; 1 in Greater Sudbury; 1 in Saskatoon; 1 in Edmonton; 7 in Vancouver; and 5 in areas less than 100,000 population.
3. Note that a CMA usually comprises more than one police force.
4. The population estimates come from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Populations as of July 1st: updated postcensal for 2007 and preliminary postcensal for 2008.
5. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population.
6. Ottawa refers to the Ontario part of the Ottawa–Gatineau CMA.
7. Gatineau refers to the Quebec part of the Ottawa–Gatineau CMA.
8. Barrie, Kelowna, Brantford, Moncton, Guelph and Peterborough became CMAs in 2006. Average number and rate are calculated from 2006 to 2007.
9. Abbotsford-Mission and Kingston became CMAs in 2001. Average number and rate are calculated from 2001 to 2007.

Note: Due to rounding, the sum of the averages may not add up to the total.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Table 4
Methods used to commit homicide, Canada, 1998 to 2008

Year	Shooting		Stabbing		Beating		Strangulation or suffocation		Vehicle		Fire (smoke inhalation, burns)	
	number of victims	percent	number of victims	percent	number of victims	percent	number of victims	percent	number of victims	percent	number of victims	percent
1998	151	27.1	186	33.3	125	22.4	61	10.9	3	0.5	12	2.2
1999	165	30.7	143	26.6	125	23.2	55	10.2	12	2.2	11	2.0
2000	184	33.7	149	27.3	129	23.6	40	7.3	13	2.4	5	0.9
2001	171	30.9	171	30.9	122	22.1	47	8.5	5	0.9	8	1.4
2002	152	26.1	182	31.3	126	21.6	67	11.5	7	1.2	9	1.5
2003	161	29.3	142	25.9	121	22.0	65	11.8	6	1.1	12	2.2
2004	173	27.7	205	32.9	137	22.0	63	10.1	6	1.0	13	2.1
2005	223	33.6	198	29.9	144	21.7	47	7.1	4	0.6	10	1.5
2006	190	31.4	210	34.7	119	19.6	48	7.9	9	1.5	12	2.0
2007[r]	188	31.6	190	32.0	117	19.7	50	8.4	15	2.5	4	0.7
2008	200	32.7	200	32.7	122	20.0	45	7.4	9	1.5	7	1.1

Year	Poisoning		Shaken baby syndrome		Other[1]		Unknown		Total	
	number of victims	percent	number of victims	percent	number of victims	percent	number of victims	percent	number of victims	percent
1998	6	1.1	6	1.1	2	0.4	6	1.1	558	100.0
1999	5	0.9	7	1.3	5	0.9	10	1.9	538	100.0
2000	4	0.7	12	2.2	2	0.4	8	1.5	546	100.0
2001	8	1.4	8	1.4	5	0.9	8	1.4	553	100.0
2002	3	0.5	8	1.4	6	1.0	22	3.8	582	100.0
2003	6	1.1	8	1.5	6	1.1	22	4.0	549	100.0
2004	8	1.3	5	0.8	1	0.2	13	2.1	624	100.0
2005	7	1.1	12	1.8	3	0.5	15	2.3	663	100.0
2006	1	0.2	3	0.5	1	0.2	13	2.1	606	100.0
2007[r]	0	0.0	2	0.3	2	0.3	26	4.4	594	100.0
2008	5	0.8	3	0.5	3	0.5	17	2.8	611	100.0

1. Other includes exposure/hypothermia, starvation/dehydration, and other methods.
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Table 5
Homicides involving firearms, by type of firearm, Canada, 1998 to 2008

	Type of firearm							
	Handgun		Rifle or shotgun		Sawed-off rifle or shotgun		Fully automatic firearm	
Year	number of victims	percent of firearm homicides	number of victims	percent of firearm homicides	number of victims	percent of firearm homicides	number of victims	percent of firearm homicides
1998	70	46.4	51	33.8	14	9.3	12	7.9
1999	89	53.9	58	35.2	6	3.6	6	3.6
2000	107	58.2	58	31.5	11	6.0	4	2.2
2001	110	64.3	46	26.9	7	4.1	3	1.8
2002	98	64.5	40	26.3	6	3.9	3	2.0
2003	110	68.3	32	19.9	13	8.1	2	1.2
2004	112	64.7	37	21.4	15	8.7	2	1.2
2005	130	58.3	59	26.5	11	4.9	7	3.1
2006	110	57.9	37	19.5	25	13.2	2	1.1
2007[r]	126	67.0	32	17.0	17	9.0	2	1.1
2008	121	60.5	34	17.0	17	8.5	4	2.0
Average 1998 to 2007	106	60.4	45	25.6	13	7.1	4	2.4

	Type of firearm					
	Firearm-like weapons[1]		Unknown type		Total	
Year	number of victims	percent of firearm homicides	number of victims	percent of firearm homicides	number of victims	Homicides involving firearms as a percent of total homicides
1998	0	0.0	4	2.6	151	27.1
1999	2	1.2	4	2.4	165	30.7
2000	0	0.0	4	2.2	184	33.7
2001	2	1.2	3	1.8	171	30.9
2002	0	0.0	5	3.3	152	26.1
2003	0	0.0	4	2.5	161	29.3
2004	0	0.0	7	4.0	173	27.7
2005	1	0.4	15	6.7	223	33.6
2006	2	1.1	14	7.4	190	31.4
2007[r]	1	0.5	10	5.3	188	31.6
2008	1	0.5	23	11.5	200	32.7
Average 1998 to 2007	1	0.5	7	4.0	176	30.2

1. Firearm-like weapons include nail gun, pellet gun, etc.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Table 6
Gang-related homicides, by region, 1998 to 2008

Year	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Manitoba	Saskatchewan	Alberta	British Columbia	Territories	Canada	Victims of gang-related homicides as a percent of all homicides
					number					percent
1998	1	31	6	2	2	2	7	0	**51**	9.1
1999	0	30	5	1	0	4	5	0	**45**	8.4
2000	4	38	11	3	1	5	10	0	**72**	13.2
2001	0	23	19	4	1	4	10	0	**61**	11.0
2002	0	7	19	4	0	9	7	0	**46**	7.9
2003	1	15	38	6	4	8	12	0	**84**	15.3
2004	0	18	17	5	4	15	16	0	**75**	12.0
2005	1	24	31	5	5	23	16	0	**105**	15.8
2006[r]	1	23	27	7	9	22	13	0	**102**	16.8
2007[r]	2	22	29	11	9	20	24	1	**118**	19.9
2008	1	21	31	14	2	35	34	0	**138**	22.6
Average 1998 to 2007	1	23	20	5	4	11	12	0	**76**	13.1

Note: Previous to 2005, police were asked if the homicide was "gang-related". Beginning in 2005, the question was amended to give police the option of specifying whether the homicide was: (a) confirmed as gang-related or (b) "suspected" as being gang-related. While it is unknown if "suspected" gang-related incidents were included in these numbers prior to 2005, indications from police officers are that they would have been in the majority of cases.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Table 7
Gang-related and firearm homicides, census metropolitan areas over 500,000 population, 2008

Census metropolitan area—500,000 and over population	Firearm homicides		Gang-related homicides	
	number	rate[1]	number	rate[1]
Winnipeg	12	1.58	6	0.79
Edmonton	16	1.41	9	0.79
Vancouver	29	1.27	19	0.83
Calgary	13	1.10	16	1.35
Toronto	50	0.90	24	0.43
Montréal	14	0.37	17	0.45
Ottawa	3	0.33	3	0.33
Québec	0	0.00	1	0.34
Hamilton	0	0.00	0	0.00
Kitchener	0	0.00	0	0.00

1. Rates are calculated per 100,000 population.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Table 8
Solved homicides by accused-victim relationship, Canada

Relationship type[1] (victims killed by)	2008 number of victims	2008 percent	2007[r] number of victims	2007[r] percent	Average 1998 to 2007 number of victims	Average 1998 to 2007 percent
Family relationship						
Spousal relationship						
Husband (legal)	22	5.2	17	4.1	23	5.1
Husband (common-law)	10	2.4	21	5.0	21	4.5
Husband (legal, separated and divorced)[2]	9	2.1	6	1.4	15	3.3
Husband (common-law, separated)[3]	4	0.9	5	1.2	6	1.3
Wife (legal)	6	1.4	4	1.0	3	0.7
Wife (common-law)	10	2.4	8	1.9	10	2.1
Wife (legal, separated and divorced)[2]	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.3
Wife (common-law, separated)[3]	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
Same-sex spouse (current or former)[4]	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.2
Total spousal	**62**	**14.7**	**62**	**14.9**	**80**	**17.7**
Non-spousal relationship						
Father[5]	18	4.3	13	3.1	22	4.8
Mother[5]	5	1.2	8	1.9	12	2.6
Son/daughter[5]	20	4.7	21	5.0	20	4.5
Sibling	10	2.4	7	1.7	9	2.0
Other family relation[6]	26	6.1	23	5.5	21	4.6
Total non-spousal	**79**	**18.7**	**72**	**17.3**	**83**	**18.5**
Total family	**141**	**33.3**	**134**	**32.1**	**163**	**36.2**
Acquaintance						
Boyfriend, girlfriend other intimate (current or former)	27	6.4	19	4.6	17	3.8
Close friend	27	6.4	25	6.0	31	6.9
Neighbour	17	4.0	4	1.0	13	2.8
Authority figure	1	0.2	2	0.5	2	0.5
Business relationship (legal)	6	1.4	7	1.7	10	2.1
Casual acquaintance	96	22.7	97	23.3	98	21.8
Total acquaintance	**174**	**41.1**	**154**	**36.9**	**171**	**37.9**
Criminal relationship[7]	37	8.7	61	14.6	47	10.4
Stranger	70	16.5	67	16.1	70	15.6
Unknown relationship	1	0.2	1	0.2	4	1.0
Total solved homicides	**423**	**100.0**	**417**	**100.0**	**451**	**100.0**
Unsolved homicides	**188**	**...**	**177**	**...**	**131**	**...**
Total homicides	**611**	**...**	**594**	**...**	**581**	**...**

1. Includes only those homicides in which there were known accused. If there were more than one accused, only the closest relationship to the victim was recorded.
2. Includes separated common-law prior to 2005.
3. Separated common-law husband and separated common-law wife were not introduced to the survey until 2005, therefore the average number and percent are calculated from 2005 to 2007.
4. Separate variables for same-sex spouse and ex-same-sex spouse were created in 2005.
5. Includes biological, adopted, step and foster relationships.
6. Includes nieces, nephews, grandchildren, uncles, aunts, cousins, in-laws, etc. related by blood, marriage (including common-law) or adoption.
7. Includes prostitutes, drug dealers and their clients, loansharks, gang members. It should be noted that some gang homicides are scored under "acquaintance".

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Table 9
Homicide victims and accused persons, by sex, Canada, 1998 to 2008

	Victims					Accused				
	Males		Females		Total	Males		Females		Total
Year	number	percent	number	percent	number	number	percent	number	percent	number
1998	381	68.3	177	31.7	**558**	475	88.0	65	12.0	**540**
1999	365	67.8	173	32.2	**538**	449	90.2	49	9.8	**498**
2000[1]	397	72.7	149	27.3	**546**	423	88.1	57	11.9	**480**
2001[1]	392	70.9	161	29.1	**553**	449	87.5	64	12.5	**513**
2002[2]	376	64.6	206	35.4	**582**	484	89.1	59	10.9	**543**
2003	391	71.2	158	28.8	**549**	489	88.7	62	11.3	**551**
2004	425	68.1	199	31.9	**624**	533	89.6	62	10.4	**595**
2005	483	72.9	180	27.1	**663**	583	90.2	63	9.8	**646**
2006	444	73.3	162	26.7	**606**	488	87.0	73	13.0	**561**
2007[r]	431	72.6	163	27.4	**594**	479	89.9	54	10.1	**533**
2008	465	76.1	146	23.9	**611**	451	90.0	50	10.0	**501**
Average 1998 to 2007	409	70.2	173	29.8	**581**	485	88.8	61	11.2	**546**

1. Total of accused excludes two persons whose gender was reported by police as unknown.
2. Total of accused excludes one person whose gender was reported by police as unknown.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

Table 10
Youth (12 to 17 years) accused of homicide, Canada, 1998 to 2008

Year	Youth accused			Rate per 100,000 youth population[1]			Total youth as percent of total accused
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
	number			rate			percent
1998	55	3	**58**	4.35	0.25	**2.36**	10.7
1999	37	9	**46**	2.92	0.75	**1.86**	9.2
2000	38	5	**43**	2.99	0.42	**1.74**	8.9
2001	27	5	**32**	2.11	0.41	**1.28**	6.2
2002	33	9	**42**	2.54	0.73	**1.66**	7.7
2003	52	10	**62**	3.96	0.80	**2.43**	11.3
2004	39	5	**44**	2.95	0.40	**1.70**	7.4
2005	62	10	**72**	4.64	0.79	**2.76**	11.1
2006	73	12	**85**	5.43	0.94	**3.24**	15.2
2007	66	8	**74**	4.93	0.63	**2.83**	13.9
2008	51	4	**55**	3.86	0.32	**2.13**	11.0
Average 1998 to 2007	48	8	**56**	3.68	0.61	**2.19**	10.2

1. Population estimates at July 1st provided by Statistics Canada, Demography Division. 1998 to 2000: final intercensal estimates; 2001 to 2005: final postcensal for 2006, updated postcensal for 2007 and preliminary postcensal for 2008.
Note: Figures in this table do not necessarily agree with figures from the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey where youth accused include a small number of accused under the age of 12.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.